(c) what steps our embassies abroad take to ensure that prospective visitors to India carry certificates showing that they are free from AIDS;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether other countries insist on health certificates from the Third World for diseases that they fear may be brought to their soil like Smallpox, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) No.

(b) Taking into consideration the various epidemiological factors involved in transmission of AIDS disease, recommendations of the World Health Organisation for its prevention and control, the availability of expertise and resources, the Government has taken adequate steps in establishment of diagnostic facilities for AIDS for screening of high risk persons and foreigners in the country. At present, foreign students before admission in Indian universities are required to undergo AIDS test.

The Government has also decided to screen foreigners for AIDS who intend to stay for more than one year, except those working in missions.

(c) and (d) No such instructions have been given to our embassies to ensure that the prospective visitors to India carry HIV free certificate. However the government has decided to accept the HIV free certificate issued from the WHO collaborating centres for AIDS.

(e) Every country has its own requirement regarding health certificates from foreigners This mostly relates to Yellow Fever and Cholera. Some countries are now insisting on HIV free certificates from the foreigners who seek employment or immigration or who intend to stay for long time.

Travelling by Train by Senior Railway Officers

2657. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make it compulsory for senior railway officers to travel by train every month in their respective sectors to study the facilities provided by railways;

(b) whether it is a fact that this convention of railway travel has been off late abandoned; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to bring about such conventions which will improve railway functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Instructions already exist for all railway officers to check various aspects of passenger amenities during the course of their inspections.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे मजदूर संघ द्वारा आयोजित भूख-हड़ताल

2658. **श्री चतुरानन मिश्र** : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) या अखिल भारतीय मजदूर कांग्रेस से सम्बद्ध पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे मजदूर संघ ने पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे के सोनपुर खण्ड रेलवे प्रबन्धक के कार्यालय के सामने 1 अगस्त से 9 अगस्त तक एक सामूहिक भूख हड़ताल की थी तथा 9 अगस्त, को प्रदर्शन किया था, और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उक्त ज्ञापन में क्या-क्या मांगें शामिल है और उनपर रेलवे-प्रशासन की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है ?

रेल मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री माधवराव सिंधिया) : (क) जी नहीं, उल्लिखित अवधि के दौरान नहीं ।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता ।

Vacancies Lying Vacant in National Railway Users' Consultative Committee

2659. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of posts lying vacant in National Railway Users' Consultative Committee and since how long;

(b) the number of meetings of this Committee held during the last three years;

(c) what were the decisions taken in these meetings; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to make this Council more active?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (d) The National Railway Users' Consultative Council has not been in existence since July, 1980. However, the Council is in the process of reconstitution.

Rail Link Between Bombay and Mangalore Along West Coast

2660. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that about a thousand km. stretch between Bombay and Mangalore along west coast is without a rail connection;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to create rail connection along west coast in form of Konkan Railway; and

(c) what are the details of the proposal with time schedule?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) provide a direct rail link between Bombay and Mangalore meant construction of about 890 km of new railway line between Apta and Mangalore. Of this, 62 km between Apta and Roha has so far been completed and opened to traffic.

Surveys to evaluate the new line between Roha and Mangalore, which is needed to link Bombay to Mangalore, have been taken up. No investment decision can be taken, till the surveys are completed and reports examined. As such, it is not possible to indicate any time schedule, at this stage.

Telphone Connections in Bihar

2661. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of telephone connections provided in the rural areas of Bihar as on the 31st July, 1987;

(b) what is the number of telephone connections in each district of Bihar;

(c) what is the number of telephone connections in each sub-division of Bihar; and

(d) what is the number of new telephone connections proposed to be given during the current Plan period in entire Bihar (District-wise)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) This type of information is collected six monthly. The telephone connections provided in rural areas of Bihar as on 31-3-1987 is 12612.

(b) This information is given in the enclosed statement. (*See* below).

(c) and (d) This information is not readily available. The information will be supplied.